

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-21 (Canceled)

22. (New) A method of operating a catheter comprising a linear wire and a tubular body positioned on a distal end side of the linear wire and allowing a guide wire to penetrate its hollow portion, wherein said linear wire is metal and has a solid cross-section and a covering layer composed of a resin material covering an outside of the linear wire, the method comprising:

(a) inserting said catheter along said guide wire placed in a blood vessel, and
(b) applying a push-in force to said catheter so as to penetrate a stenotic lesion in said blood vessel, wherein said push-in force is applied by an operator from a proximal end side of said linear wire and thereby transmitted to said tubular body.

23. (New) The method according to claim 22, further comprising:

(c) pulling out said catheter from said blood vessel and inserting a balloon catheter along said guide wire after said step (b).

24. (New) The method according to claim 22, wherein the linear wire has a surface layer composed of a hydrophilic material covering an outer surface of the linear wire.

25. (New) The method according to claim 22, wherein the tubular body includes a plurality of markers each having a visualization property arranged in a longitudinal direction.

26. (New) The method according to claim 22, wherein the tubular body has an inner layer positioned on an inner circumferential side, an outer layer formed on an outer circumferential side of the inner layer, and a reinforcing body placed between the inner layer and the outer layer.

27. (New) The method according to claim 22, wherein the catheter further has an operation portion placed on a proximal end side of the linear wire.

28. (New) The method according to claim 27, wherein the operation portion can be adjusted and fixed for its position with respect to the linear wire.

29. (New) The method according to claim 27, wherein the operation portion is adhered to the linear wire.

30. (New) The method according to claim 22, wherein a center of the tubular body is decentered with respect to a center of the linear wire.

31. (New) The method according to claim 22, wherein the linear wire is connected to the tubular body under a condition that a distal end portion of the linear wire partially overlaps with a proximal end portion of the tubular body.